



**WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, July 14, 2004, for the purpose of presenting a concept for the skateboard park.**

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. It was held in the Multipurpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Joe McNeal, Assistant Director, Recreation; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Tom White, Greenbelt News Review, and about 15 audience members. Wally Hollyday, California Landscape Design, arrived at about 9 p.m..

After introductions, Mayor Davis announced that Mr. Hollyday's flight had been delayed because of weather.

Mr. McNeal gave a review of progress on the design plans since April. He said Mr. Hollyday's goal was to design a park that would serve the community and meet the needs of a variety of ages and skill levels, rather than serving a narrow age group. He said the proposed design has a cost of \$180,000, which does not include geotechnical studies or fencing. He said California Landscape Design (CLD) could do a four-foot powdered wrought-iron fence for about \$10,000.

Mr. Roberts asked about landscaping costs. Mr. McNeal said those costs were not included either but that the assumption was it would be handled in-house.

Mr. McLaughlin commented that at this point, with the extra costs to be added, the project is heading toward \$220,000 and that staff wanted to get Council review of the basic plan before going further into the details.

Mr. McNeal described the favorable comments and references he had received from other jurisdictions with CLD parks, including Arlington and Charles Counties.

A woman in the audience asked if Mr. McNeal could be more specific about how much of the design was for street-skating, and he responded that about two-thirds of it was. She said the boys in the audience did not think there was enough street orientation. Another audience member responded that, on the contrary, he thought Mr. Hollyday had done an excellent job of integrating the plaza concept into the park design. The first audience member said at the last meeting Mr. Hollyday had not been responsive and had said he knew better than they did what they wanted.

Mr. Herling asked if the smaller size of the proposed park was in itself a problem. Mr. McLaughlin said, no, he did not think so, given that the goal was not to make it a

destination park but rather a community park. Ms. Mach followed up, asking if the park would be too small to have enough variety to hold the interest of the users. An audience member responded that the important thing was the design, not the size. Mr. McNeal added that the quality of the work and materials was also very important.

After some discussion of the schedule of work, Mr. Putens asked if this was what everyone wanted. Mr. McNeal commented that initial feedback had been good but that tonight people seemed at least to want more rails. Mr. Putens asked how much flexibility there would be later to make changes. Mr. McNeal said there would be some on smaller features, but not on the concrete.

Mayor Davis then asked the boys in the audience if they would prefer to have no bowl at all. There appeared to be some consensus to get rid of the snake-run and have more street components.

Another audience member observed there were two sets of stairs in the area and that both had been excluded, despite the popularity of stairs as a component. It was explained that these were existing stairs that were extensively used for other purposes.

Mr. Hollyday having arrived at this point, Mayor Davis asked him to talk about the design. He started out by stating that there were definitely limits imposed by both the available funding and the available space. He said he wanted to make it clear that in terms of the budget, he should still be removing items, not adding them back in. He also emphasized that the goal of the park was not to replicate all the components the boys already were using and liked. Andrew Mangum and Nicholas Bailey went up to the easel, conferred with Mr. Hollyday, and made some suggestions on the design. Mr. Hollyday also explained in more detail how the snake-run would work and why that basically is for street-skating.

Mr. Hollyday elaborated on what he had said before, saying that he has to fight against the misconception that every skateboarder is a skateboard park designer. He said that although he could cater to the specific desires of a small number of skaters, everyone will not agree. He said his goal was to look ahead and build for the future, in the process challenging the boarders to learn new skills and routines rather than continuing to do the same things.

Mayor Davis said it sounded as though Mr. Hollyday thought some of the suggestions that had been made could be used: adding some rails and developing one set of stairs. Mr. Hollyday agreed that he understood what they wanted and that some adjustments could be made. The Mayor then asked if this basic design was workable for the boarders with some minor changes. Andrew and Nicholas, who were the only boarders left at the meeting, agreed that it was.

One of the audience members commented that the boys who were present had expressed interest in the possibility of competitions and that learning to use new components would be essential to doing that.

There was some discussion of using temporary or removable components, such as those in the temporary park, on the ground level. Mr. Hollyday said he could not recommend doing that, since it often created liability issues.

There was some discussion of materials. Mr. Hollyday favors coping on the bowl although it initially chips. There was also additional discussion of aspects of the design. Council thanked Mr. Hollyday for coming.

#### Other Business

Mr. McLaughlin reported that Fire Chief Rudy's opinion was that the meeting with Chief Blackwell would no longer be necessary, given the county's prompt response to the Fire Department's documentation of reduced response as a result of the reduction in career staff. It was agreed Mr. McLaughlin would call Chief Blackwell to convey that the City no longer finds it necessary to meet but would be pleased to do so if the Chief wishes.

Ms. Mach passed on to Mr. McLaughlin some materials on grants she acquired at a proposal-writing workshop at MML.

Mayor Davis reported that:

The museum has now produced a brochure of the type to place in hotel information racks.

Chief Rudy does not want to have the restored fire truck lead the Labor Day Parade unless the GVFD's other equipment can stay with it, rather than bringing up the rear.

Congressman Hoyer called her at home to ask the status of the City's negotiations with the Greenbelt Station developers. He had been getting calls regarding the ramps and has continued to say that unless the developers come to terms with Greenbelt, there will be no action. The Mayor told him that there are no discussions pending, and the decision on the appeals is still pending.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk